

Rattlesnake Creek Partnership Meeting

November 10, 2004
Stafford, Kansas

Attendees: Leroy Wetzel, Vernon Hirt, Scott Carlson, Frank Austenfeld, Steve Sorenson, Robert Lewis, Dennis Dutton, Richard Wenstrom, Darrell Wood, Kent Lamb, John Janssen, Alan Crane, Deb Baker, David Essmiller, Larry Chadd, Chad Milligan, Obie Pepper, Megan Estep, Justin Vosburgh, Mica Schnoebelen and Ed Healey.

DWR Staff: Tina Alder, Bruce Falk, and David Zook

Facilitator: Tina Alder

Announcements: Water PACK is hosting a Water Conservation and Ag Profitability Conference, January 13 and 14, 2005, at the Highland Hotel and Convention Center in Great Bend, Kansas. For more information on the conference, please contact Water PACK, 306-A North Main Street, St. John, Kansas 67576.

Irrigation Transition Assistance Program (ITAP) rules and regulation hearings are scheduled for December 21, 2004. The first hearing will be held at 9 am in Topeka and the second at 6pm at the Highland Hotel in Great Bend, Kansas.

Partnership Updates:

Water PACK gave Senator Brownback a tour of the Rattlesnake Creek subbasin. The tour allowed the members to discuss with the senator funding needs for conservation programs in the subbasin.

GMD No 5 emphasized the need to remove end guns to meet conservation goals.

Division of Water Resources, Bruce Falk updated the group on abandonment files and the deadline to have these files identified by June 2005 and the effectiveness of the Blatant and Recurring Over-pumpers project in the subbasin.

Rattlesnake Creek Newsletter:

The Partnership has agreed to begin a quarterly newsletter that will be sent to all water users in the subbasin and others interested in the project area. The first newsletter will be mailed in January 2005. Eve Tracy, of the Division of Water Resources, provided the group with a template and suggested articles for the newsletter. Guest articles are welcome.

Irrigation Transition Assistance Program (ITAP):

Since many of the attendees were present for the presentation by Scott Carlson during the Middle Arkansas working group, the presentation did not need repeated

Richard Wenstrom informed the group that Kansas Livestock Association supports ITAP across the state.

Fifteen acre-foot exemptions and if it would be allowed in areas targeted for ITAP was discussed. This exemption will not be available in targeted areas.

GMD No 5 would like end guns and the water 'attached' available for purchased through ITAP or some other similar program. They feel is an effective way to reduce consumptive use, but no conclusions were drawn on how to effectively evaluate the success.

Four-Year Review of Management Plan:

The Partnership agreed to have an addendum to the original management plan that would outline the effectiveness of the first four years and the goals for the next four years.

The Partnership discussed what priority areas should have the most emphasis for water conservation. Overall, the group felt the corridor is still the primary target, but water conservation is needed in the entire subbasin to meet goals set forth in the management plan. It was re-emphasized that the goal in the subbasin is to maintain baseflow and if met then, we have made progress.

Since there is limited funding for the programs the group needs to remain focused on key programs to meet the goals. Programs that focus on conservation and enforcement by DWR should be the focus for the next four years.

Richard Wenstrom informed the group that Kansas Livestock Association support the restoration of state water plan funds to target conservation in the subbasin and stressed that Water PACK should as well. Members of the group stated that Feed and Grain needs to get on board and understand the big picture, the result is an IGUCA if the goals are not met which will have a much larger economic impact than ITAP or other similar programs.

The Partnership will be finalizing the four-year review in January. The Partnership will determine which programs to focus on and how to get participation by the water users in the subbasin. This is extremely important in order to meet goals over the next four years. The Partnership will submit revisions to the four-year report to the Division of Water Resources prior to the January meeting.

The next meeting scheduled for January 25, 2005 at 9am in Stafford, KS.

Basin Team

